

RECKLESS RALPH'S

# DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Vol. 19, No. 9

September 1951

Whole No. 228

## HANDSOME HARRY of The Fighting Belvedere

By Ima Tellinya

To my knowledge there's oodles of Handsome Harry's floating around, but the one I want to write about is more down your alley, because this feller appeared in a nickel library under his name quite a spell back.

Year in and year out there are hundreds of Handsome Harrys, some more handsome than others 'tis true, and there are also many Harrys who are the cause of more broken mirrors than I would care to count. The kind I refer to in this catagory need but to give a hasty glance into a mirror and crack, wango, the entire surface is no longer a thing of beauty. But let us put aside this sad result of what nature sometimes hands out, the one I want to write about is **THE HANDSOME HARRY** as described in a library of that name in the, I hope, not forgotten year of 1899.

It occured to me that because no mention of this deep sea Adonis had received no attention since 1942 when in the Roundup, Reckless Ralph let loose with just a few items, and along with a few others I swiped from Roundups further back, possibly I can give a few added details with which I am personally familiar. In 119 of the Roundup, Ralph states the many stories about this Handsome guy were written by an English author name of Harcourt Burrage. I wonder did Burt L. Standish grab that name for Frank Merriwells gal. Its possible. Anyway, Burrage launched his hero into the hearts of English and American Boys in the early 1870's. The stories started as a serial in the Boys Standard, a forerunner no doubt of an English Penny dreadful. They then appeared in shilling volumes. In the good old U. S. A. their first appearance was found in the Family Story paper, No.'s 135 to 192, that's 52 issues me lads. Following this so you can gather how popular the stories were, Frank Tousey swiped em and they appeared in Boys of N. Y. Numbers 444 to 527. Golden Hours by Street and Smith also got in on the gravy, and neither Tousey nor S. and S. ever gave Burrage a dime for their use nor used his name as author. Tousey also made goniff by using Harry in Happy Days, but that came after the library I am going to write about. Now Burrage was not overburdened with affection for Tousey pilfering his idea, nor S. and S. either, but in the later case he softened up a little as S. and S. did pay him for the rights of other stories he wrote.

All the above information I pilfered with the help of Brother Flaum's Index of the Roundup, and discovering what numbers had any reference, old boy Research (myself) got in touch with another Roundup Brother whom I knew has every Roundup in his archives from number nothing up to the present. The feller I refer to bears honorable mention as he's a great lad. I was all set to give Fred G. Orphal, or G. Fred Orphal as he prefers to run his name, three great big cheers for his kindness, but not wanting to spoil him I



decided two were enough. Now if you fellers jest ain't met Fred you missed sumthin. He seems to have anything (except novels) and everything pertaining to novels that met his interest down through the years. Believe it or not the feller has saved every gawsh darn gas bill, marked paid, since Fido was a gleam in his Poppa's eye. The Fido I speak of passed on in the early 90's. I asked Fred what in Sam Hill he was saving em for, couldn't be because you took no chances of them trying to collect twice. He kinda ignored my question but I figured mabe they were kept in case he ran out of Sears Roebuck catalogues, him living out in the country—if you know what I mean.

But here I am running out on Handsome Harry, so follow on. Harry stands out in my mind not from those very early issues as they were a wee bit further back than when I was a pup. It was as I recall a bitter cold day in January when it was best to sit ye down behind the old pot belly stove and bury the beezer in a dime novel—or Shakespeare, if you liked the other extreme.

My big brother Fred came prancing into the what we called a parlor on this particular day, waving a new library in the air, he having found or swiped a nickel some place had to display his treasure before our eyes. By our, I mean Aunt Nellie, Grandpaw, Uncle Willie and myself. Anything new that arrived in our house even if it was a bottle of ink caused much commotion. The new library I speak of, of course was No. 1 of Handsome Harry. The date on the cover was Jan. 27th, 1899. Now don't confuse this Handsome Harry with the Red whiskered egg found in the Diamond Dick stories, that Handsome Harry was a far cry from our new hero. The only way either could remind you of either was they were both so different.

In later years I saw a few illustrations at Ralph's place up in Massachusetts showing some cuts of Handsome Harry in Boys of N.Y., fellers of all the homely looking mugs you ever saw, he looked more like something the cat wouldn't even drag in. But when the new Handsome Harry Weekly came out, in color, size 6x9 a very neat little publication, Harry was given features and a figure the girls today would go ga ga over. Anyway back to my brother's dramatic entrance into Buckingham Palace with No. 1. Right away an argument started first about wasting a perfectly good nickel, and then who would read it first. The argument was quickly settled as it usually was by Aunt Nellie, who settled most of our arguments having a hefty right that often was given plenty of exercise. She settled it by taking a crack at it, with Grandpaw a close second. He argued that being he was an old salt himself having crossed the ocean once he should be the one, it being a tale of the sea. Not a chance, Nellie had two strikes on every one around there before anything started. Yehr Nellie, she deserves mention, what a gal, many pals of mine would often at length discuss her physical distractions, and a few fellows who were of a poetical nature would make some allusion to a pimple that was supposedly on a certain portion of her anatomy, just to make it

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rhyme. I wasn't really surprised that Grandpaw wanted a whang at it, the book I mean, not the poetry about Aunt Nellie because Grandpaw always had a heave ho when it came to novels, especially if they didn't cost him anything. I can still see the old buzzard with his whiskers, pure white, the part of em anyway that were not bleached around his kisser from tobacco juice. From between his lips there emerged twenty hours a day out of the 24 a long pipe that smelled to high heaven, and no wonder we liked the summer time better with all windows open. I often wondered how they would look, the whiskers if given a sudden bath into soap suds, but as this never came to pass I had to be satisfied with just wondering. But to give the man credit, few ever did, in a financial way, he was quite a painter. Not a house painter, that took too much energy, he did his stuff with a quarter ounce brush on canvas, much lighter than working on a house. Now if any one were in a generous frame of mind and inspected his efforts, the paintings were not too awful, I think he got two bucks for one once after a lot of sales talk, and one thing that really stands out in my mind is when he made one of Aunt Nellie, he did her in oil, and so help me when it was finished, believe it or not, I'd swear it looked more like Uncle Willie.

But here I'm getting away from Handsome Harry again, just didn't want him to hog the show entirely.

Now as stated, Burrage was the author, but on No. 1 Tousey must have disliked the name, for obvious reasons, and the author became J. G. Bradley and Gaston Garne. What's in a name thought Frank, especially if the right one might cause a law suit. Bradley was also cast aside, Frank was really getting cold feet by this time and according to the name of author on the next eleven numbers Handsome Harry himself took over, and Harry must have gotten scared too because he had his name taken off the next beginning with No. 13, right up to the finish which was 16. Either Harry was superstitious not placing his name on No. 13, or he knew enough when to quit.

Now the gist of the stories were mostly tales of the sea, but much of the action took place on land also. The principals were besides Harry, a giant Negro by the name of Samson, a Chinaman called Ching Ching and the Boat-swain, Bill Grunt. These characters kept up a lively interest in the comedy field and were quite safe from Milton Berle who would no doubt have stolen the best lines. Handsome Harry was wronged by some viper whom he chased through the seven seas and by land with his trusty crew to help. The Belvedere was armed for the chase good enough to take care of many vipers, and no doubt the cannons aboard wiped out many tough hombres. His worst enemy was finally retired with a pitchfork to the lower regions. Harry himself was tried in London as a Pirate, was found not guilty and I go by Ralphs statement in the Roundup that everything turned out hotsy totsy. But Ralph did not say what happened with Juanita, Harry's female thrill. Funny, these heroes don't have enough trouble with their enemies they just have to get into real trouble and get mixed up with a dame. For real honesta goodness trouble the villians don't hold a patch to what a filly can do to ye. Allow the voice of experience to tell you. Ask Dad, he knows (Sweet Caporals ad). Or the feller who owns one (Buick ad).

While up at Ralph's place one day he dug out a complete set of this Handsome Harry Weekly, a very rare thing to own and I wonder does he still have the entire set. With his usual goodnatured unselfish way he allowed me to take the set back home. I never got the chance to read them being too busy at the time, but I did enveigle Nameless Joe to make a set of photos from the covers for me. And I'll try to describe just a few of them, they sure are worth looking at. Ralph has the negatives so if you're really interested, am sure at a very nominal fee Ralph can supply you with the entire 16. Nice for a collection. Might as well stick in a commercial for you Ralph.



No. 1. A scene on board the Belvedere a small war ship of days gone by, shore line in the distance, cannon mounted ready for action and a very handsome looking guy (Handsome Harry) stands with hand outstretched pointing at Bill Grunt. Behind Harry stands Samson. Bill Grunt dressed in naval costume (a Boatswain) holds a rope in his hands, why I can't figger, but he has it, and below the attractive picture is the following title:

"Mind you don't commit yourself Grunt," said a quiet voice beside him, and the Boatswain, turning beheld a handsome young fellow, whom the crew called Captain Harry to his face, and Handsome Harry behind his back. No wonder my brother Fred parted with his nickel to get this dainty morsel of a library into the house. The title of No. 1 of course was Handsome Harry of the Fighting Belvedere.

No. 2. Handsome Harry's Peril, Or Saved by His Trusty Crew. What a thriller diller that must have been. The scene, off shore, an overturned life boat, with Harry perched on the keel waving a sword over his head, apparently slashing away at seven dusky fiends who were after his hide and hair. In the distance two sailing vessels, safe from all this turmoil. How he ever got out of that mess I dunno, but he did in true dime novel fashion, his crew no doubt dropped from the sky in a helicopter and away they went—or sumthin.

No. 3 reached our house safe and sound, Grandpaw and Nellie chipped in for the required nickel and as I didn't have a chance to dig up even a hundredth part of that sum by myself, I was only allowed for a short space of time to gaze at the cover. Wish I could own the entire library today so I could gloat over having it and they ain't. Anyway—On No. 3 a desperate battle takes place aboard the Belvedere, with Harry and crew knocking a raiding band of scoundrels in all directions. Harry's crew all dressed in nice neat sailor suits with not a spot on em in spite of the big fight going on. But what gets me is that not one of Harry's crew has a weapon while all the enemy—ziz have swords in their hands, ready to slice off any head that gets in the way—regardless. With only their fists flying like pistons, straight from the shoulder, a la Fred Farnot, they sure put those man eaters in their place.

No. 4. We had to borrow that one—Grandpaw and Nellie just couldn't make the grade financially. Handsome Harry in Africa Or A Land Hunt for His Foe. The scene, an African Village. Very attractive too, the kind of a cover Tousey's artists just knew how to attract the juvenile gullible. Here Harry is shown with his friends, not the entire crew, but Samson, Ching Ching and a few of the crew. Harry advances to meet the Chief, both are clasping hands, an African bit of how are ye no doubt. Want the title below photo? Here 'tis.

"Bow Missa Harry," said Ching Ching, "and smite the hands togedder," Harry did so and the giant black did the same, then drew a few paces nearer.

Ching Ching, a character I'm sure was imitated in the Young Wild West Library as both these Chinks were master magicians, gives a good demonstration of his powers on No. 5. Again a scene aboard the Belvedere. Here Ching Ching performs his magic before Harry and a few goggle eyed members of the crew, and of course Samson. Ching has his box of tricks at his feet. I'll give you the title on this one which can possibly outdo my description.

The conjuring box of Ching Ching was a great addition to the Belvedere and often Ching would go aft to perform before Harry, Tom and Ira. But he never allowed even Samson to inspect the apparatus.

So No. 6 rolls around. Here we see the gal in Harry's life. The one gal who gave him many mad moments. The scene which most likely is below decks just shows three figures. Harry, a Don, dressed up like a Christ-



mas tree without lights, and Juanita, also with more fancy clothes on than anything you see walking the beaches today. Well fellers, to go through the entire 16 issues, where its so easy to ask Ralph for a set, why knock myself out, and you too?

Even with the help of Ralph who loaned me the set, Flaum who got nervous prostration getting up the Index, which by the way you fellers should have a copy of, G. Fred Orphal who helps out with loaning me copies of the Roundup, I still don't know from all these, did Harry ever marry that gal. The only way I could find out would be to read the last number which I AIN'T got, or ask Grandpaw, Aunt Nellie or my brother Fred. One of em would know, but as they are all long since under the daisies where the woodbine twineth, the road from which I'm told there is no return, I'll never know. But when my time comes, and it may not be so far off, and I meet em in that far off place, by cracky I'm goin to ask em.

### OLD TIME BOYS BOOKS

by J. Edward Leithead

#### Part 2

One of the numerous pseudonyms used by Ellis was "Col. H. R. Gordon," under which he penned an excellent historical series featuring famous Indian chiefs, although the heroes were young scouts in buckskin in each book: Pontiac, Chief of the Ottawas, A Tale of the Siege of Detroit, Black Partridge, or, The Fall of Fort Dearborn, Tecumseh, Chief of the Shawanoes, A Tale of the War of 1812, Red Jacket, the Last of the Senecas, Logan, the Mingo, A Story of the Frontier, Osceola, Chief of the Seminoles. These were published by E. P. Dutton & Co. in a very fine edition, with illustrations by Wm. M. Cary. (Another book on the same publisher's juvenile list, similar style of binding, same illustrator, but by a different author, Elbridge S. Brooks, was The Master of the Strong Hearts, A Story of Custer's Last Rally. Sitting Bull is a leading character and this volume might very well be included to round out the series about famous Indian chiefs.)

Patriot and Tory, and The Boy Patriot were two Revolutionary War stories by Ellis, and A. L. Burt Co. published the following from his pen: The Young Scout, Adrift in the Wilds, A Young Hero, A Jaunt Through Java and Lost in the Rockies. Another frontier tale of his was Red Plume, the publisher I do not recall. David McKay published six of his books, Arthur Helmuth, Check No. 2134, From Tent to White House, Perils of the Jungle, and a series of two, On the Trail of Geronimo and The White Mustang. Uncrowning a King, an Indian tale, was, I think, published by the Penn Publishing Co.

Some text-books and a great number of books of history were written by Ellis (I never have seen but one of the latter, a big volume on Indians, well illustrated), and it is amazing that he was able to write so many books, of uniform excellence, when one considers that he also was occupied successively by the duties of school teacher, school principal and superintendent of schools. But I understand that he turned to writing exclusively sometime in the '80s.

(to be continued)

#### "SIDE NOTES"

An occasional paper about old books, old printing types, penny dreadfuls, Toy Theatres.

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#### NOVELS WANTED

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George Flaum  
206 Prospect St., Newark, N. Y.



## NEWSY NEWS

by Ralph F. Cummings

Glad to report that we got our second class mailing permit on the Roundup. Although it is necessary to list the printer's address as the publication office, please continue to send all news, ads, etc., to me at Fisherville.

J. J. Coughlin, Box 706, Lawrence, Mass., has been very sick for the past year, and had to go under two major operations, and is learning to get around on crutches now—drop him a get well card fellers.

Frank Henry has moved again, he is now at 24 Oread St., Worcester, Mass. What's the idea of moving so much Pal. Last week you were at 31 May St. Maybe May wasn't as good to you as you had expected?

Joseph J. Myler, 333 Pelham St., Rochester, N. Y., wants Beadles Dimes #44, Old Dan Rockback, 51 Red Rob, 452 Rainbow Rob, 422 Blue Grass Burt and 680 XX, the False Clue?

George Flaum visited George French up at his summer home at Kezar Falls, Maine, a month or more ago.

J. Edward Leithead has sent me a fine article on the Liberty Boys of 76, it sure is a corker, and I'm in hopes of having it in the next number.

See the fine article on Handsome Harry in this issue, by Ima Tellinya, the feller everybody knows.

Any one having a copy of Automobile Lillian to sell, get in touch with ye editor Cummings.

The publisher of the Little Blue Books is dead! He was found dead in a swimming pool at his palatial home at Girard, Kansas, Aug. 1st, 1951. It is believed he had a heart ailment.

Fred Lee says according to the article that appeared in the Roundup of March 1951 "The Little Gem," tells of a snake crawling out of a cage or cell, in the first Secret Service I ever read, and Fred says it is No. 273 as he has it in his collection. 273 is The Bradys and the Bond King, or Working on a Wall Street Case. So it must have been No. 998 that

I had read, as this is a reprint of #273. Thanks to Fred for looking it up for us, now where can I get S. S. #998?

Ewdin H. Sissung says he was down in the old haunts of the James Boys in Missouri, and he said it was very interesting.

F. F. Johnson says he has received the Tecumseh book all O. K. Farwell also says that A. M. Winfield and Arthur Lee Putman were pen names, Putman and Alger are the same, also Winfield and Stratemyer.

I was up in Buffalo, N. Y. on a 3 day trip, with Clyde Wakefield on June 29th, 1.05 p.m. Friday to Sunday, July 1st, at 11.15 we arrived in Worcester, a very nice trip, but I was all tired out, after over 900 miles round trip. Would liked to of stopped to visit some of the members, but didn't have time, sorry to say. Hope to go again some time, and see Niagara Falls, too.

Charlie Duprez says: Howja like Buffalo? I spent my diaper days there, Mom and Pop played in a German stock company there around the very early 1900's and I wasn't seven until my noble body emerged at the threshold of Brooklyn, N. Y. Twas in Brooklyn that my baby blue eyes first beheld a dime novel. Yep me big brudder was an addict and had a drawer full of Diamond Dicks which he removed every night and ironed out after which they were carefully put back. He had another drawer full of Happy Days. My days were made very unhappy by said brother when during his absence down to Colon, S. America, I loaned em out to a pal of his who to this day never returned em. And frankly Ralph, I don't think he ever will, I gave up all hope a few weeks ago when I learned he passed out, Happy Days and all. So his happy days may possibly be just starting—if you know what I mean—you don't so we shall skip it. I can still remember when he came home one night with No. 3 of Work and Win and I wanted to read it, but Grandmaw made me git back to bed. Grandmaws were cruel in



those days. I also remember when the Jessie James stories reached our home, the large Detective Library. On the top of the page as I remember was a drawing on one side of Jessie and Frank on the other side, both on a horse I think with guns ablazin. So much for dime novels.

#### RECENT RENEWALS TO THE ROUND-UP

4. J. Edward Leithead, 5109 Cedar Ave., Phila. 43, Pa. Advisory Board.
71. John E. Clark, 1010 Laurel Ave., Bridgeport, Conn.
101. Henry Stinemetts, 223 W. 2nd St., Los Angeles 12, Calif.
104. Charles J. Duprez, Bellerose, L. I., N. Y.
146. Ernest M. Metler, Box 123, Closter, N. J.
179. Wallace H. Waldrop, Route #5, Box 289, Greenville, S. C.
34. J. J. Coughlin, Box 706, Lawrence, Mass.
96. Earl D. Newitt, 3326 So. Salina St., Syracuse 5, N. Y.
134. Frank E. Henry, 24 Oread St., Worcester, Mass. (New Address)

### FOR SALE

For \$150.00 cash, I will sell my complete set of Frank Reade stories in the 5¢ Wide Awake Library. All are originals but No. 553 which is a reprint and all are in very good condition, for their age, one or two may not be as good as I'd like to have them, but all in all, they are well worth the price I am asking for them.

**RALPH F. CUMMINGS**  
Fisherville, Mass.

### WANTED

All kinds of old magazines, such as Weird, Curiosa, Baseball Guides, Foto Albums, Illustrated books, Film Fun and similar. Send me your lists of all kinds.

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Golden Days (Bd. Vols) Vols. 10 11 12 13 14 15 at \$4.00 per vol., or all 6 vols. for \$20.00, all in good condition.

Beadles Dime Novels (original, no picture on front cover). No. 2, The Privateer's Cruise and the Bride of Pomfret Hall, by Harry Cavendish. A Sea Tale of '76. Pub. by Irvin P. Beadle, 1860. A very rare copy and in good condition, all covers intact. Price \$17.00.

A check list of all 16 numbers of Handsome Harry Weekly 1 to 16 for 10¢. Get a list for your collection Pards.

Now is the time to get a set of the Novel Hunters Year Books, for these years, 1926, 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31. 1931 is the last number, price 25¢ each. Lots of fine stuff on novels in them, information and what not.

Thrilling Stories of White Slavery, by Carl C. Quale, price 25¢.

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**Ralph F. Cummings**

**Fisherville, Mass.**

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